

The proposed action is included in the NCDOT *2012-2018 State Transportation Improvement Program* (STIP) as project number P-5204. Funding for the Project is anticipated to come from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

## NEED FOR PROJECT

As discussed in more detail in **Section 1.5**, the primary needs for the proposed Project are summarized below.

The McLeansville Road, Carmon Road, and the Bullard and Black private at-grade crossings cross both a main line track and a siding track. Trains waiting on the siding have the potential to block these at-grade crossings while other trains pass on the main line; or train crews must disconnect the train cars stored on the siding into two sections, with one section on either side of the road crossings. Both of these options result in undesirable operating conditions for both trains and vehicular traffic.

At present, traffic along McLeansville Road and Carmon Road traveling through the at-grade railroad crossing must stop for passing trains and trains parked on the siding tracks. Typically, six passenger trains per day and 5-10 freight trains per day cross McLeansville Road. In addition, sometimes trains on the siding track can block the crossing for up to an hour. These operations contribute to vehicular delays and have a negative effect on traffic flow.

Providing a grade separation for the at-grade McLeansville Road crossing and closing the Carmon Road and the Bullard and Black private crossings will eliminate the potential for vehicle/train collisions, which will improve safety for both road and rail traffic.

## ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

**Chapter 2.0** discusses all alternatives considered for the proposed action. Detailed study alternatives include the No-Build Alternative and two Build Alternatives (Build Alternative A and Build Alternative B) with three service road options. Build Alternative A with Service Road 1b is NCDOT's Preferred Alternative. These alternatives are described below.

**No-Build Alternative.** The analysis of the No-Build Alternative is required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and serves as a benchmark against which the impacts of other alternatives can be compared. The No-Build Alternative would not make any improvements to the existing at-grade crossings, except for regular maintenance. The No-Build Alternative will not meet the Project's purpose and need to reduce the potential for vehicle/train collisions, or improve efficiency for trains or vehicles.

**Build Alternatives.** The Build Alternatives (Build Alternative A and Build Alternative B) will provide a grade-separated bridge over the railroad tracks at McLeansville Road, and will close the Carmon Road at-grade railroad crossing and the Bullard and Black private at-grade railroad crossing. Build Alternative A will construct the grade separation directly to the west of the existing McLeansville Road at-grade crossing. Build Alternative B will construct the grade separation directly to the east of the existing McLeansville Road at-grade crossing.

Each alternative also provides a service road to access the properties that currently use the Bullard and Black private crossing. There are three options for this service road, Service Road 1a, Service Road 1b, and Service Road 2. Each service road provides access to the Bullard and Black crossing properties via Hines Andrews Road.